

At a Glance - "...it was a tired old town when I first knew it."

retrospective
family / town

- **Lesson Objective:** Describe the novel's narration and consider details from the narrator's childhood.
- **In the Novel:** In her characteristically ironic tone, Scout (the narrator) discusses the ancestry of the Finch family, specifically her slave-owning ancestor Simon Finch. In doing so, she implicitly explores the importance of one's heredity in Southern culture. Scout also discusses the slow pace of life in Maycomb County, alluding to the effects of the Great Depression, and introduces her childhood friend Dill.
- **Key Questions:** Questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 10 are the most important questions of the day and should not be skipped.
- **Content Advisory:**
 - On p. 4, the word "Creek" is the name English settlers gave to the Muscogee tribe of Alabama
 - On p. 4, there is a reference to slavery and a glossed over description of a plantation; Slavery is discussed in Q5.
- *** Teachers might use the opportunity to explain that while Harper Lee uses the term "slaves," we will use the term "enslaved people" to remember that they were people, and to place their humanity back into our language.**
 - On pp. 5 and 7, the text includes the words "jackass" and "son-of-a-bitch" (p. 5) so teachers may want to use **Read Aloud** or carefully select and prep the reader.
 - On p. 6, the death of the narrator's mother is revealed.
 - On p. 8, there is reference to Dill's embarrassment about not having a father.
- **Words to Watch For:**

Day 1: To Kill a Mockingbird
 pp. 3-10

Page	Word/Phrase	Meaning in Context	Page	Word	Meaning in Context
3	assuaged	relieved or soothed	4	dispatch	send off to a destination, or "do away with"
4	piety	deep respect for god and religion	4	imprudent	with little care for consequences
4	stinginess	being unwilling to share belonging, or spend money	5	ambled	moved at a slow and relaxed pace
4	persecution	the punishment of others based on race or religion	6	courteous	in a polite and considerate way
4	brethren	fellow Christians	6	detachment	lack of interest or emotion
4	customary	according to the usual practices of a society	6	tyrannical	using power in a cruel or unfair way
4	modest	moderate or small in comparison	7	entity	something that exists separate from other things

- **Nightly Reading: To Kill a Mockingbird pp. 7-9** (from "Early one morning" to "the idea of making Boo Radley come out.")
- **Homework Options:**
 - Questions (attached)
 - Knowledge Organizer Review
 - Key questions from the lesson that were skipped for time

Agenda

- Do Now ~~(9)~~ minutes ^{10/11} ₆
- Retrieval Practice (10 minutes)
- Introduce To Kill a Mockingbird (1 minute)
- Cycle 1: Read Aloud or FASE Reading: Novel Pages 3-5 (25 minutes)
- Cycle 2: Read Aloud or FASE Reading: Novel Pages 5-7 (20 minutes)
- Cycle 3: AIR: Novel Pages 7-9 (15 minutes) ₁₀ ¹³
- Exit Ticket (10 minutes)

Lesson Plan

Do Now ~~(9)~~ minutes ^{10/11}

- Give students about 5 minutes to read the embedded text “To Kill a Mockingbird,” review the images, and respond to both questions. Briefly review student responses using **Cold Call**, **share out**, or a **brief discussion** of Q2. *Note: If teachers think students are unfamiliar with the Great Depression, they may briefly drop in the explanation: “This was a period in America where the majority of the country struggled economically” or direct students to the term on their Knowledge Organizer before the reading.*

- Q1: Think about Harper Lee’s description of her childhood. In what ways was her childhood similar to yours? In what ways was it different? *TTT, poll, 2 responses*
 - Answers may vary.

- * Q2: What aspects of these photos capture the mood evoked or suggested by the description of the Great Depression or of Lee’s childhood? Explain. *heads*
 - Answers may vary. Students may see the dirt roads, farm cart, absence of people, and/or few small storefronts as connected the description of the Depression in the Knowledge Organizer or to Lee’s recognition that there was not much money, that there was not much to do besides read/live in their imaginations.

Retrieval Practice (10 minutes) *6*

- **Note:** Since this is the first day of the unit, you may use this time to:
 - Roll Out the use of the Knowledge Organizer, and/or
 - allow students to keep the Knowledge Organizer on their desks during this brief Retrieval Practice and/or
 - give students time to study the term **Great Depression** and the first four words of the “Key Literary Terms” section,
- Before the lesson, answer these questions yourself based on previous lessons and the Knowledge Organizer.
- Review the questions in the student packet with your class using a variety of **Means of Participation** (e.g., **Cold Call**, **Take Hands**, **Turn and Talk**) to support pacing and engagement.
- **Note:** You may opt to not ask all the questions we’ve listed. Prioritize as you see fit.

Introduce To Kill a Mockingbird (1 minute)

- **Frame:** Before beginning to read, give students a 1-2 sentence explanation of the new novel. You may choose to use or adapt the following language:
 - I’m excited to introduce to you our new novel, To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee. This novel was written in 1960 and has since become one of the best-selling novels in America. It won a Pulitzer Prize in 1961, one of highest honors in literature. It is a story of childhood in a small town in the American South during the Jim Crow and Great Depression eras, which we will learn about in this unit. But before I reveal too much, let’s dig in together and meet our narrator.

Cycle 1 (25 minutes) — Pages 3-5

- Read: Using Read Aloud or FASE Reading, pick up at the beginning of the novel, stopping at the break toward the end of p. 5 “...every family in town,” reminding students to annotate for details that describe the narrator.
 - Content Advisory: The words “jackass” and “son-of-a-bitch” occur on p. 5, so teachers may want to use Read Aloud or carefully select and prep the reader.
- Note: Preview the reading by saying: “This section goes a bit deep into the narrator’s family history, but don’t worry if it is confusing right now—we’ll dig into these references as we continue the unit. For now, just focus on the details that help you understand the narrator.”
- To avoid unnecessary confusion, when “Simon Finch” is introduced at the bottom of p. 3, teachers should explain that this is an ancestor of the narrator, whose last name is also Finch (in the text, the narrator has not revealed her name—though we know it is “Scout Finch” from the Do Now reading).
- Write: After the Turn and Talk for Q1, students should write responses for Q2.
- Discuss: Ask student-to-share out responses to Q1 and Q2.
 - Q1: Turn and Talk: What are your first impressions of the book? What details does the narrator clearly reveal about herself? What questions do you have?
 - Answers will vary. Teachers should focus on surfacing these points about the narrator: the narrator’s brother Jem is twelve when book starts, he broke his arm somehow, he plays football, he is 4 years older than the narrator, they call their father “Atticus,” they are Southern. If time, you may also note that Atticus is a lawyer, and the narrator mentions Atticus’ sister (Alexandra, her aunt), brother (John/Uncle Jack). The narrator, Jem, and their father live in Maycomb, Alabama.
 - Questions may include: How did Jem break his arm? Who are the Ewells, Dill, “Boo” Radley?
 - Q2: As you learned from the Knowledge Organizer, retrospective narrative is when a narrator tells a story by looking back on past events. What details from p. 3 are clues that this is an example of retrospective narration?
 - The author says, “When he was nearly thirteen,” “When enough years had gone by” and “to look back on them,” all clues that the events of this story have already happened and the narrator and her brother are processing them.
- Write: Ask students to Turn and Talk for Q3. Q3b is a Challenge if pacing allows.
- Discuss: Ask student-to-share out responses to Q1 and Q2 and lead a brief discussion of Q3.
 - Q3a: Turn and Talk: Why might it seem odd that a family from Alabama is thinking about a battle in England?
 - It seems far away and relatively unimportant nowadays.
 - Q3b: Challenge: What might this narrator believe about the importance of ancestry to Southerners? *hard*

- Tracing your ancestry is of great importance, to white Alabamians, at least, and not being able to trace your ancestry is an embarrassment, even if the details seem far in the past with little to do with their current lives. Students may recall the image/embed of the Do-Now and posit that people might be reaching back for something to boast about, since they did not seem to have much to boast about in their Depression-era lives.

skip **Q3c: What details does the narrator choose to introduce herself and her story? Why might this be?**

- The narrator describes details about her ancestors, her relatives, and her family even before she tells us much about herself. Family is important to her.

- Write:** Ask students to Turn and Task to respond to Q4 and respond in writing to Q5. Alternatively, you could complete Q5 question whole-group, using Cold Call to support pacing and ratio.
- Discuss:** Briefly share out key ideas.
- Content Advisory Note:** Teachers might use the opportunity to explain that while Harper Lee uses the term "slaves," we will use the term "enslaved people" to remember that they were people, and to place their humanity back into our language.
- * Q4a: What is "the disturbance between North and South"? (Use your Knowledge Organizer if you need to!)
 - The Civil War is the "disturbance" between the North and the South. *TI*
- Q4b: Consider the use of the word "disturbance." Why might the narrator have chosen this word instead of "war" or "fight"? *Write → CC → brief disc.*
 - "Disturbance" is a much less graphic descriptor—and much less true—than "war." It implies that the North and South were just bothering each other.
- skip* Q5: Do you think that Simon Finch "forgot" that his religious leader was anti-slavery? What do you think "with their aid" means?
 - It's likely that Finch did not "forget" but ignored his religion, because he needed enslaved people to build Finch's Landing. If he owned enslaved people, it is also unlikely that Finch helped in the construction of his homestead—"with their aid" covers up the hierarchy here, a euphemistic description of reality.

Cycle 2 (20 minutes) — Pages 5-7 *FASE*

- Read:** Using ~~Read Aloud~~, pick up on p. 5 at "Maycomb was an old town" and read through to page 7, pausing at "That was the summer Dill came to us." Remind students to continue to annotate for details that help them understand the narrator's world. What is her family situation? How does she spend her days?
 - Potential Annotations:**
 - Maycomb, old, tired, "grass grew on the sidewalks," hot

- Lives with father (Atticus), brother Jem, housekeeper Calpurnia on the main residential (filled with houses, not shops or businesses); mother dead; can play in the street when she is "almost 6."
- Write: Ask students to Turn and Talk for Q6.
- Discuss: Cold Call for a few responses to Q6.
 - * Q6: Turn and Talk: The narrator says she was almost six years old when the story starts. Does this sound like the narration of a six-year-old? Why or why not?
 - Although occasionally the narrator has a childish focus ("calling me home when I wasn't ready to come"), overall the elevated vocabulary, the focus on ancestry and the past do not make us think of a 6-year-old.
- Write: Students should write responses to Q7 and Turn and Task for Q8. Note: Teachers may want to review Q7 before assigning Q8.
- Discuss: Cold Call or share out responses to Q7 and lead a brief discussion of Q8.
 - * Q7a: Circle the words or phrases that describe the pace of life in Maycomb, Alabama.
 - Potential Annotations: Independent
 - "moved slowly," "ambled," "shuffled," "took their time," "day...seemed longer," "no hurry," "nowhere...nothing...nothing"
 - Q7b: What are some reasons that the narrator might remember her town in this way? Try to use the phrase "retrospective narration" in your answer. Independent
 - In the retrospective narration, the narrator is describing the town as she remembers it when she was six years old—she is looking back at her childhoods as moving slowly because six-year-olds do not have many responsibilities—few chores, little schoolwork, just long days to fill. Plus, as we saw in the images from the Do Now, this was a quiet, rural town, so it might not have offered much action for a child. Depression
 - Q7c: Challenge: How is the narrator's description of Maycomb similar to the description of Harper Lee's childhood from the Do Now?
 - Both descriptions highlight the fact that there is little money to spend on things, and not much to do or see in the town.

- Q8a: Choose two details from p. 6 that best characterize them.
 - See possible answers in Part b, below.
- Q8b: From the descriptions of Atticus and Calpurnia, what can you infer about the narrator?
 - Narrator calls her father by his first name and says he is "detached," so he is not as involved with raising his children as Calpurnia is. The narrator battles with Calpurnia, notes that she is being ordered out of the kitchen and Calpurnia's hand is hard—so she might be getting spanked. Although she is described as the "cook," she seems to be raising the narrator and more involved in her day-to-day life. Narrator is either stuck

Stamp While Reading.

treated unfairly (she seems to think so) but if Atticus takes Calpurnia's side, narrator might be a bit of a handfull

Cycle 3 (45 minutes) — Pages 7-9 *FAST or RA to p. 8 AIR "Don't have any picture shows..."*

- Read: Use AIR to start reading on p. 7 ("Early one morning...") and end on "...gave us the idea of making Boo Radley come out" on the top of p. 9. *As you read, annotate for details that make Dill a good playmate. Note: The narrator's name, Scout, is revealed toward the bottom of p. 7.*
- Write: Ask students to Turn and Talk for Q9 and respond to Q10 in writing.
- Discuss: Cold Call to surface answers to Q9 and Show Call Q10.

Q9: The narrator calls Dill a "curiosity" and a "pocket Merlin." Using the definitions of "curiosity" and "pocket Merlin" from the "Words to Watch For" table, explain why Scout calls Dill these things.

- Curiosity: Dill is physically strange or "curious." Although he is a year older than the narrator, she "towers" over him. He's from a town where there is a movie theatre and has supposedly braved scary movies like Dracula. He doesn't know who his father is. All of these things are intriguing to the narrator and Jem because they are unconventional, or unusual in a place like Maycomb.
- Pocket Merlin: Dill is willing to play any role in dramatization of stories and bring them to life. Dill brings magic to their world with his eccentric and theatrical personality.

* Q10. Think about the description of the relationship between Dill, Scout, and Jem (pp. 7-9). Then use this kernel sentence as a starting place to write one sophisticated, expanded sentence to capture what happens in this scene.

- Possible answers: *Independent -*
 - Who: Scout (the narrator), Jem, and Dill
 - When: Over the course of the summer/When school is out/When Dill comes to visit
 - What: Acting out adventure stories/building a tree house/imaginative games
 - Why: Because there was not much to do in their town/because Dill had so much imagination
 - Expanded Sentence: Throughout the course of the summer, Jem, Scout, and Dill act out adventure stories to entertain themselves since there is not a lot to do in their town.

Active Obs to start 1-2

skip

Exit Ticket (10 minutes)

- Q1: Select two details from Harper Lee's memories of her actual childhood and explain how Lee fictionalized them (put them in the narrator's description of her childhood) in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. *Bullets!*
 - o Possible answers:
 - o "We didn't have much money" - nothing to buy and no money to buy it with" in the description of Maycomb.
 - o "We were readers" - Atticus read to the children; Scout is already reading and she doesn't even go to school; the children act out books and stories
 - o "We didn't have toys/lived in our imagination/transfer...high drama" - acting out the stories with Jem and Dill.

Homework Answers:

- Q1a: Who is "we"?
 - o Jem and Scout (the narrator)
 - Q1b: What is the "accident"?
 - o Jem's broken arm
 - Q1c: Explain how this line is an example of retrospective narration.
 - o This is retrospective narration because the narrator is telling the sorry herself ("we") and is looking back to the past ("enough years had gone by").
- Q2: Answers will vary.